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REDUCING FT. SUMTER.

Extensive and Formidable Works
Around Charleston Harbor.

SECRECY NECESSARY.

Batteries Within Speaking Dis-
tance of Rebel Pickets.

CHARGE ON FT. WAGNER.

The Big Rock Fort Almost
Leveled to the Sea.BY JAMES H. HARRIS, LIEUTENANT, 1ST N. Y.
ENG., DUNKLEES, N. J.

THE reduction of Fort Pulaski, at the mouth of the Savannah River, Georgia, during the latter part of 1862, was considered at that time the greatest feat in the annals of military engineering, but when taken into consideration with the demolition of Fort Sumter there was no comparison. Gen. Gilmore's operations in the northern part of the Department of the South stands preeminent. The greatest feat that modern times has produced was accomplished when Fort Sumter was demolished and the enemy was compelled to evacuate his strongholds on Morris Island.

From information obtained from contrabands and deserters from the enemy, Charleston, S. C., was supposed to be defended by the most formidable lines of heavily-armed intrenchments on all sides, excepting the sea side. Here Forts Sumter, Moultrie, Wagner, Johnson and other smaller works defied an approach from the sea. The strength of the James Island intrenchments was tested by a bold but unsuccessful assault upon them by our forces, under Brig. Gen. Henry W. Benham, on the 16th day of June, 1862. A long line of intrenchments on James Island extended from Secessionville to Fort Johnson, looking towards Morris and Folly Islands, and sweeping all the water approaches from that quarter. Reconnoissances had also been made in Copeland's and Ball's Bay to the northwest of the city. The intrenchments here extended on the mainland from Wando River to Copeland Sound; these were armed with cannon of large caliber, and swept the water approaches in this direction.

THE STRENGTH OF FORT SUMTER was tested by a gallant but unsuccessful attack by our ironclad fleet, under Rear Admiral Dupont, on the 9th day of April, 1863. The engagement lasted about one hour. One of the ironclads, the thin-armed Keokuk, was so much injured on that occasion that she subsequently sank abreast of Morris Island, and the others withdrew, some being considerably damaged. The Passaic, Capt. Ammen commanding, was struck a number of times, the indentations on the turret made by point-blank shots being about the size of an ordinary saucer.

The success of Gen. Gilmore in the reduction of Fort Pulaski from batteries erected on Tybee Island, determined him to get possession of Morris Island, and from convenient localities erect batteries and reduce Fort Sumter by regular siege operations. He was not deterred by the fact that the distance from where he proposed erecting his breaching batteries against Fort Sumter was nearly twice as great as it was at Fort Pulaski, and that Forts Wagner and Gregg intervened. The preliminary operations for obtaining a lodgment on Morris Island was, first, the real attack from Folly Island, to partake of the nature of a surprise. Second, a demonstration in force on James Island by way of Stono River, to prevent reinforcement to the enemy on Morris Island, and, if possible, draw a portion of the Morris Island garrison to that quarter. Third, the cutting of the Charleston & Savannah Railroad at Jacksonville by ascending the South Edisto River, in order to delay reinforcements from Savannah, should the attack be temporarily checked or

PREMATURELY INTERRUPTED. The demonstration upon the Stono River was commanded by Brig. Gen. Alfred H. Terry, and it was eminently successful. A part of the Morris Island garrison was drawn to James Island by it. The attempt to cut the railroad between Charleston and Savannah was entrusted to Col. Higginson, commanding the 3d S. C. (colored). It signally failed, with the loss of two pieces of field artillery and a small steamer, which was burned to prevent its falling into the hands of the enemy.

"The storming of a fortified position, except when preceded by the slow operations of a regular siege, is always an operation attended with imminent peril in its execution and great uncertainty in its results. The best troops can seldom be made to advance under the fire of even a few well served pieces of artillery. The hazard of such an undertaking, great as it is under ordinary circumstances, when both parties operate from ground, becomes immeasurably augmented when the assaulting forces have to approach in small boats from a distant point, exposed to full view and constant artillery fire, and then to disembark and form upon the open beach in the presence of the enemy, and finally to advance under the combined fire of artillery and small arms. There were the difficulties and conditions so successfully solved in the descent upon

Morris Island on the morning of the 10th day of July, 1863."

From fugitives and deserters it was known that the enemy had a number of guns mounted in batteries of single pieces, and so arranged that they commanded each other and also the north end of Folly Island, held by our advanced pickets, and could be so traversed that they could sweep the length of Lighthouse Inlet, which separated the two islands.

ON THE NORTH END OF FOLLY ISLAND there was secretly placed in position 10 batteries, mounting 47 guns of various caliber. These batteries were constructed under the direction of Brig. Gen. Israel Vogdes. To the successful execution of these duties the subsequent triumph was due. In no small degree secrecy was therefore an essential element in the preparations. Most all of the batteries and all the transportation of the materials to them were accomplished at night, and in silence.

An English blockade runner, the Ruby, had been chased ashore just at the entrance to Lighthouse Inlet, within point-blank range of our batteries, and while the enemy was engaged in wrecking the vessel our batteries were quietly and rapidly being pushed forward to completion.

The fact that 47 pieces of artillery, with 200 rounds of ammunition for each gun, together with suitable parapets, splinter-proofs and magazines, were secretly placed in the battery in a position within speaking distance of the enemy's pickets and within pistol-range of the wreck, furnishes by no means the least interesting and instructive incident of this campaign.

On the evening of the 9th of July, 1863, about 2,000 men under Gen. George C. Strong embarked in small boats on Folly River, and at daybreak on the morning of the 10th the head of the column reached Lighthouse Inlet. These boats kept close to the shore, and were screened from the view of the enemy by the marsh grass.

The batteries on Folly Island opened shortly after daybreak, and were served rapidly for two hours, when Gen. George C. Strong's landing was promptly effected under a hot fire of artillery and musketry; but they did not falter for a moment. All of the enemy's batteries on the south end of Morris Island were gallantly carried. Before noon three-fourths of the island was occupied, and our skirmishers were within musket-range of Fort Wagner. On the following morning, July 11, an attempt was made by Gen. Strong to carry Fort Wagner by assault.

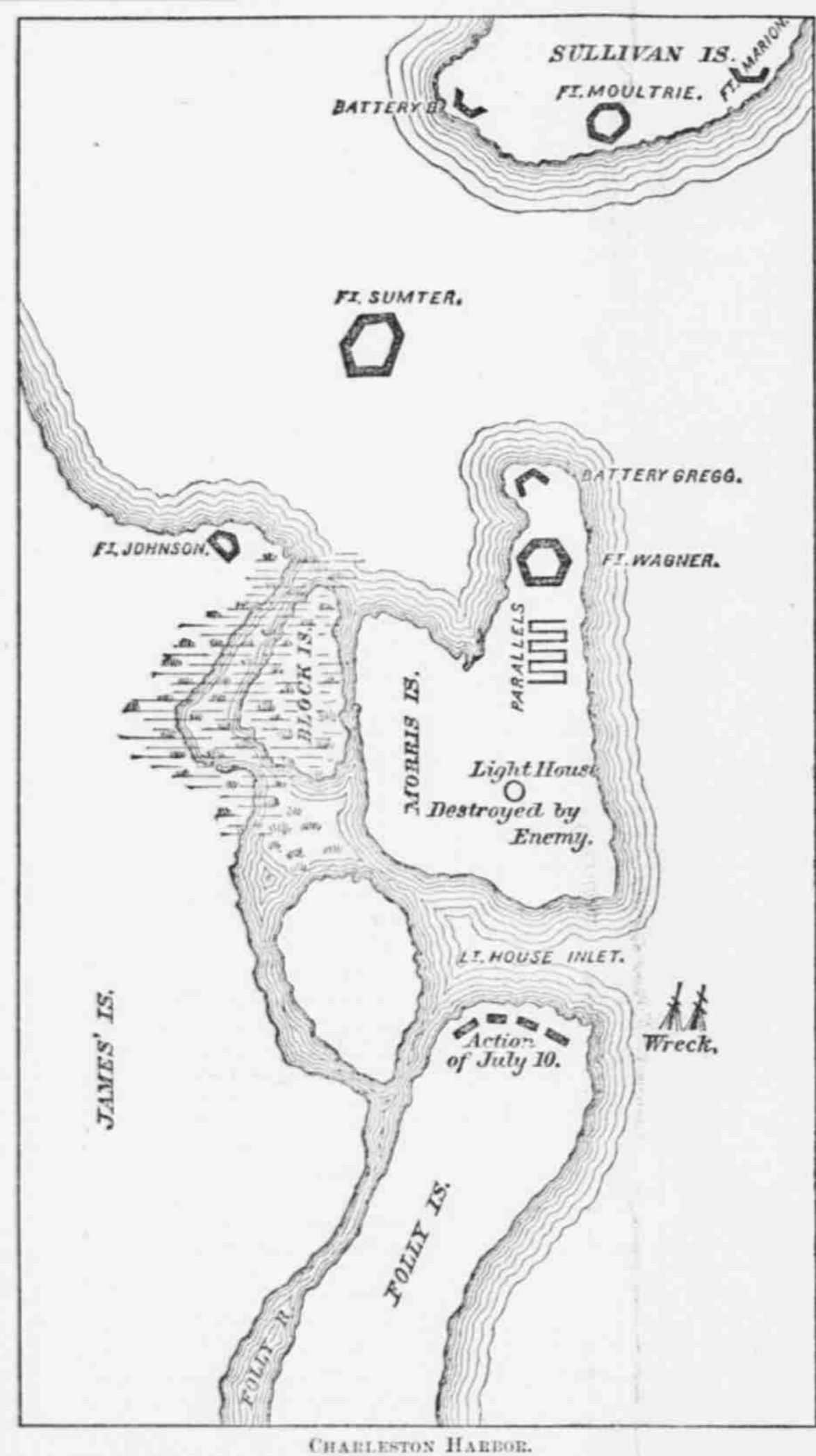
THE PARAPET WAS GAINED, but the supports recoiled under the fire to which they were exposed, and could not be got up. Our loss in this attempt and at the landing was 159 killed, wounded and missing. The Confederate General (Benjamin) in his official dispatch, admitted a loss of 300, including 16 commissioned officers.

The failure of the assault, taken in connection with apparently trustworthy statements made by prisoners and deserters, established the fact that Fort Wagner was of great strength, its truly formidable character and hidden resources could not yet be developed, and was not known until afterward that the island at its narrowest point, just south of Fort Wagner, had been reduced by the encroachments of the sea to about one-third of its width, as shown in the latest coast-survey charts, and that at times the waves of the sea frequently swept entirely over it, practically making that part of Morris Island defended by Forts Wagner and Gregg an island of itself. This difficulty had to be overcome in capturing the position, whether by assault or by gradual approaches. Preparations were made, and the second assault of Fort Wagner was made on July 18, 1863. Gen. George C. Strong's Brigade led the assault. It was composed of the 54th Mass. (colored), Col. Shaw; 6th Conn., Col. Chaffield; a battalion of the 7th Conn.; the 48th N. Y., Col. Barton; the 23d N. H., Col. Jackson; the 9th Marines, Col. Emery, and the 76th Pa., Col. Surawidge, and was supported by Col. Putnam's Brigade, comprising his own regiment, the 7th N. H., Lieut. Col. Abbott commanding; the 100th N. Y., Col. Drury; the 62d Ohio, Col. Pond, and the 67th Ohio, Col. Voris. They were all small in numbers.

AS THE HEAD OF THE COLUMN advanced the guns of Wagner, Gregg, Sumter, and also those on James and Sullivan's Islands opened on it simultaneously, and a most destructive musketry fire was instantly poured upon the advancing column from the parapet by the garrison of the work, and although the leading regiment was thrown into a state of great disorder the southeast bastion was gained and held for some time. The advantage which the darkness gave the enemy rendered it necessary for our troops to relinquish their hold on it. Our loss was very severe, especially in officers of rank. Gen. George C. Strong and Col. Chaffield, Putnam, and Shaw were killed, or died of their wounds. After the failure of the assault upon Fort Wagner on the 18th of July, 1863, the Commanding General determined to proceed to the erection of breaching batteries against Fort Sumter upon the ground then within our possession; and as it would require the entire labor of the command the approaches to Fort Wagner were not commenced until the completion of the breaching batteries against Fort Sumter should render the labor of the troops available for this purpose.

The selection of the ground being determined upon, work was commenced on the night of July 23, and from this date steadily progressed day and night, with the labor of mounting guns, supplying magazines with implements and ammunition, until all were completed. Most of the heavy artillery was brought from Hilton Head, and all of it was landed on Morris Island after the 23d. The place of landing for the artillery and all of the supplies was at the south end of Morris Island, on Lighthouse Inlet.

A NARROW, CONFINED STREAM, approached from the sea only through a crooked, narrow channel, and over a bar admitting, at high water, vessels of only eight



or 10 feet draft. Nearly one-half of the time there was no ingress or egress to the inlet, and much valuable time was lost in waiting for high water on which to float our transports over the bar.

From the place where the landing was effected on Morris Island to where our batteries were to be located, was a distance varying from one and a half to two miles. This entire distance was heavy sand, through which all the guns were dragged into position by troops at night. Seven of the heaviest guns were thus dragged to the immediate front of Fort Wagner, placed in position within point-blank range of the heavy pieces of artillery with which that place was garrisoned, and within 400 yards of the enemy's sharpshooters, who were armed with telescopic rifles of extraordinary power.

On the evening of the 16th of August, a sufficient number of batteries being completed and in readiness to warrant the opening of the bombardment, final orders were issued to

OPEN FIRE UPON FORT SUMTER at daybreak on the morning of the 17th from all the batteries which were completed, and the other batteries as fast as they were finished. The fire was incessant, and kept up continually from daylight until dark, until the evening of Aug. 23. For seven days the guns were directed upon the gorge wall, and had resulted in bringing it down to such an extent that a practicable breach had been accomplished. On the 23d the fire was directed to the southeasterly face, with the view of dismounting the guns on the barbets of this face, which commanded the entrance to the harbor, as well as to destroy the guns on the northwesterly face, which this fire would take in reverse. The fire upon the gorge had by the morning of the 23d succeeded in destroying every gun upon the parapet of it, and as far as could be observed, had disabled or demolished all guns upon the parapet of the two faces looking toward the city of Charleston, which had also been taken in reverse.

The parapet and ramparts of the gorge were for nearly the entire length of the face completely demolished, and in some places everything was swept down to the arches, the debris forming an accessible ramp to the top of the mounds.

There being nothing more to gain by a longer fire upon the gorge faces, the guns were all directed again upon the southeasterly flank, and continued incessant until the demolition of the fort was complete, so far as its offensive powers were considered. Every gun upon the parapet was either

DISMOUNTED OR SERIOUSLY DAMAGED. The terreplein for the entire circuit of the place must have been shattered and plowed up by our projectiles, hundreds of which had been seen to strike upon it. The parapet could be seen in many places completely worn away down to the terrepleins, both on the sea and channel faces. Fort Sumter was a ruin, and effectually disabled for any immediate defense of the harbor of Charleston.

to lay siege to Fort Wagner and compel its surrender or abandonment. This siege work extended through a period of 59 days. It was chiefly carried on under cover of darkness and under fire of artillery and sharpshooters.

On July 12 the first parallel was opened, and the construction of batteries against Fort Wagner was commenced; distance, 1,250 yards.

July 18 the second unsuccessful assault was made.

July 22 the second parallel was opened, 870 yards distance.

Aug. 9 the third parallel was opened; distance, 540 yards.

Aug. 10—This night perfected the defensive arrangements of the third parallel. At 2 o'clock a. m. Fort Wagner

was captured.

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Much of the credit attached to the success of these operations

BELONGS TO THE 1ST N. Y. ENG.

Col. Edward W. Serrell. In addition to his duties as regimental commander, Col. Serrell was assigned by the Commanding General as an Assistant Engineer on his staff. From the first blow to the last, in every part of the work, at all times of the day and night, in all weathers and under the most severe fire, the line officers, non-commissioned officers and privates of this regiment were found on duty, executing the most difficult kind of work, and directing the infantry details on the other work.

Capt. Joseph Walker was highly conspicuous for his display of bravery and energy in advancing the approaches against Fort Wagner. His company (1) was continually on duty, and more than one-half of the "sap" was advanced under his direction. Lieuts. Farrand, Wilken, McGuire, Talcott, Parsons and Harold were constantly on duty. The latter commanded the detachment of engineers on Folly Island, which made nearly all of the sap rollers, gabions and fascines used in the siege. From Aug. 11 to Sept. 9, under his direction, 1,429 gabions, 11 sap-roller gabions, 462 fascines and 302 sap faggots were made. This material was transported on wagons at least five miles to the front, and also ferried across Lighthouse Inlet.

Fort Wagner was found to be a work of the most formidable character. Its bomb-proof shelter was capable of containing from 1,200 to 1,500 men. Its armament consisted of 18 pieces of ordnance of various calibers. Nearly all of them were large. It afforded a striking example of the

INDUJICIOUS LOCATION OF AN EARTH-
WORK.

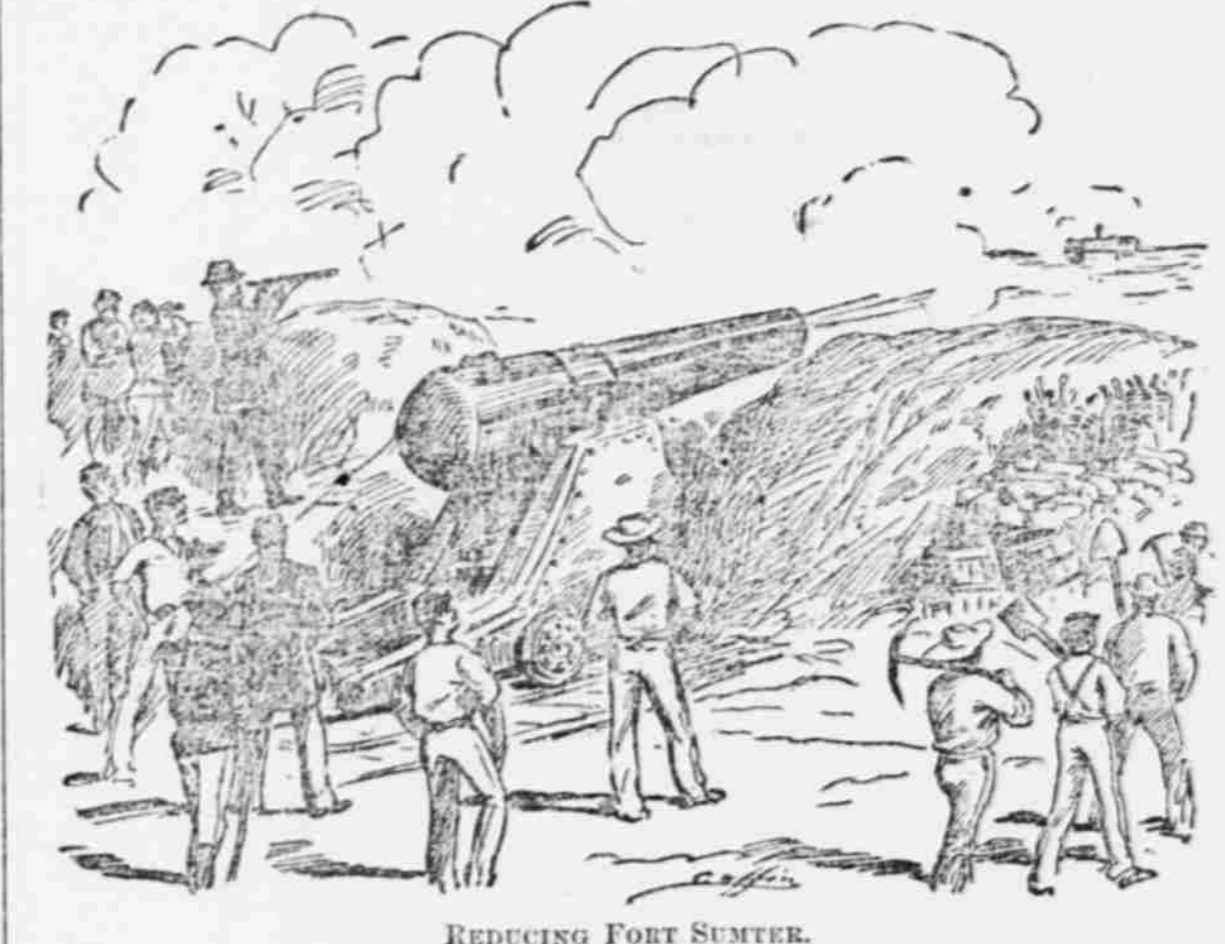
"The great mistake of its engineer was locating it near the north end of Morris Island instead of on the sand hills, two miles further south. If placed there, or even one mile further south, he would not have been forced to witness the humiliating spectacle of the destruction of his principal work on an interior line and over the heads of an inferior one.

"With only one inclosed work for the defense of Morris Island, the proper location for it was near the south end. Too much dependence was placed on the guns at the south end. Their resistance to our attack on the 10th of July was by no means formidable. A few light pieces, well posted and secure against capture by a assault, would have been far more efficient. The location of Fort Wagner was as injudicious as it was formidable in its construction.

"Notwithstanding the heavy bombardment to which Fort Wagner had been subjected, in which 1,633 rifle projectiles and 1,533 mortar shells had been expended since the commencement of the attack by our land and naval batteries, its defenses were not materially injured—the parapets, traverses of the sand hill still remained. Immense holes were cut into the earth, but still no injury was done which a good night's work would not repair."

A summary of the Morris Island battles and the protracted siege is thus lucidly given by the enemy's reports:

"Outfought we were not, but we were



REDUCING FORT SUMTER.

OUTWITTED AND OUTGENERATED by the Yankees. Our garrison never exceeded 1,600 men, but had withstood the thoroughly-equipped command of Maj. Gen. Gilmore and the fleet commanded by Admiral Dahlgren.

"For every pound of sand used in the construction of Fort Wagner, its assailants expended two pounds of iron in the vain attempt to batter it down. At the close of the bombardment

IT STOOD SULLEN AND DEFIANT as ever.

"The total loss in killed and wounded on the island from July 10 to Sept. 7 was only 672.

"During the evening of the 18th of July, the garrison suspected that an assault would again be made, and was on the qui-vive—every man was at his post. Near dawn the outgoing pickets heard the cautious advance of steadily-placed footsies. It was the storming party, anxious to effect a surprise. The guns were instantly manned, and then at a signal the whole battery became transformed, as it were, into a vast earth cloud darting lightning and bellowing thunder, the great Columbiads peeling forth their bass of death.

"A conflict so desperate and murderous, and characterized by such indomitable valor on both sides, ranks the defense of Fort Wagner among the sternest fights of the Secession or any other war."

The writer of this article wishes to express his thanks to the D. Van Nostrand Co., of New York City, for permission to make extracts from and verify the official records and memoranda in their possession, from "The Engineer and Artillery Operations Against Charleston," by Maj. Gen. Quincy A. Gilmore.

Experiences
AND
Adventures

IN DISTANT LANDS.

Dangerous Hunting Along Rivers of the
Flowery Kingdom.

ATTACKED BY "PILINGS."

An Exciting Stern Chase for
the River Bank.BY T. DEN DOLLER, U. S. N.
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IN China, the name fisherman is almost synonymous with pirate, for any unwary traveler, shipwrecked mariner, or foreigner is likely to have his throat cut if caught by a fisherman. They prey upon the smaller coast native traders, and sometimes even attack large junks when they are in strong enough force. In the rivers and near large cities they are particularly venturesome, often landing to rob houses and carry away women, whom they sell in some other town. The law, though very severe, is lax, and a few years ago piracy, though punished with death, was frequent all along their coasts, and particularly had in and around Canton, near the island of Hong Kong, and in the rivers about Shanghai. In the summer of 1878, having for some time desired to see Foochow and the ground over which the Taeping war



OUR BOAT.

was fought, I hired a large native river boat, with five men, and being unable to persuade any of my friends to go with me, started off alone to explore the river country toward and as far as Foochow, hunt along the banks, where there were large quantities of water-fowl and small deer, and see all that was curious and strange in that part of China. I was then rather a novice in the ways of the people, and not wholly prepared to find them as bad as I did. The boat was a long, flat-bottomed scow, with a roof of matting on curved bamboo extending from side to side. This top was fastened to the gunwale of the boat and to a wooden partition near the stern, where a wooden deck, level with the rail of the boat, served as a platform for the steersman and as a sleeping-place, on top and beneath, for the crew. In the bow, which was shaped like the toe of a pointed shoe, was another deck, on which the four rowers stood, the hole underneath being the stow-place for my provisions, bedding, etc.

I SLEPT IN A HAMMOCK slung in the center of the boat, having also there a table and two stools, while my guns and rifle were slung along the sides of the boat. By removing the boards near the top aft I got a good breeze through the boat, while I could roll the roof matting up along the sides for a couple of feet and view the shores, shoot ducks, and otherwise amuse the long hours when we were moving from place to place.

The views on a Chinese river, as a rule, are not lovely—a wide, muddy stream, with low, diked banks, or long stretches of sedge and reeds. Sometimes a short cut is made through a canal, when you can step ashore on either side. Here the boatmen pole the boat along, or, landing, walk with tow-ropes on both sides.

At one place where we made a short cut the boat was dragged up a long incline, ropes being taken to windlasses on either side at the top of the incline. The rise and fall of the river is sometimes 10 or 12 feet, caused by the ocean tides backing up the river water. For this reason the canals are usually separated from the river by dams, so that at low water they remain nearly full, while at high water boats pass over the top of the dam without touching. In this canal we ran



DRAWING A BOAT OVER A LOCK, along for nearly six hours, and when we reached the river again we

PASSED OUT OVER THE DAM easily. At another time we reached the river when the tide was out and were dragged up to the top, and then went sliding down the long incline into the river at an angle of 45 degrees.

These little experiences served to break the monotony of an otherwise slow and weary trip, for, as I could not converse with the boatmen, when game was not in sight I sat mute. Ten or 12 miles per day, with numerous halts to rest, eat, and shoot, made

the 40-odd miles to Foochow a good five days' trip, and, except that I had had plenty of shooting, the excursion would have been very tiresome. At Foochow, however, I enjoyed myself. I arrived there the noon of the fifth day and immediately sought out a resident Missionary, who very kindly placed at my disposal a native servant who spoke pigeon (i. e., business) English. With him I spent two days in exploring the various temples, pagodas, and the shops of the place, sleeping one night in the boat, the second at the Mission. I made numerous purchases of native wares, and to this show of wealth, I presume, I may ascribe the trouble I met with as I came back through the canal and river near the place.

The city of Foochow is a net-work of canals leading from the river in all directions, and serving, to a great extent, for the thoroughfares of the city. Immense numbers of boats, large and small, huge junks, loading and unloading, make it, from the water, a busy place, but the town itself is squalid, dirty, and unwholesome—in fact it is, like all Chinese cities,

A STENCH IN THE NORTHERN. The whole city is surrounded by a high mud wall, which is crested on top for small arms. Leaving Foochow, my boatmen took me on up the river and soon we reached patches of higher land, when I landed and shot bagfuls of wild pigeons, and once started some golden pheasants. I was scouting along, with one of the men carrying the bag, when two first pheasants rose close at hand. I killed the first, but only broke the wing of the second, and John Chinaman gave chase, but in doing so got in fine, so I could not fire again. He was rapidly overtaking the bird when he tripped in a hole and measured his length on the ground. As I came up he was rubbing his shins and using the poorest English I had heard from any of my men. His vocabulary of profanity was large and quite varied, but evidently meaningless to him, for he was applying to himself terms generally used about some one else. I soon got a shot at my second bird, and, picking it up, returned to where John was still dealing his own mother's reputation. His evenness of temper, however, soon returned, but ever after, when this one pointed out game, he would say, "Dam shoot."

I was rapidly picking up the names of all kinds of wild fowl, and knew that "Dam quack, quack" meant a duck, while "moose, moose" meant a deer. Time was passing, and soon two-thirds of my leave was gone and I made a start back. During the return I seldom stopped to shoot, deferring any further sport till I was sure of my distance from home.

Passed Foochow in the early morning, and stopped there for an hour ostensibly to purchase some rice, and then started off down the river, our carmen being assisted by the strong current. I was lying stretched out in the hammock, comfortably smoking,

WHEN I WAS STARTLED by a crash, and my hammock dropped, letting me down into the bottom of the boat; this was followed by the loud report of a gun, and a second ball crashed through the matting, and had the first missed and not cut my hammock down, the second would have finished me, for it passed just where my body had been. Loud cries from the boatmen and a complete cessation of rowing caused me to go out to the front to see what



FINISHING THE PIRATE.

was happening. I found my five men flat on deck, while some 200 yards away a large, rakish-looking boat was coming down the river after us, having come out from hiding in a canal. My men were repeating the words "Piling! Piling!"

The situation now flashed upon me. We were pursued by pirates, who evidently knew who they were after, and had lain in wait. The pursuing boat had four oars, while two men armed with long, old-fashioned muskets, called "jingals," were firing as fast as they could load. Glancing about me, I saw that we were in the stronger current, and that, could I get my men to row, we should be able to turn a certain point not far in advance, and thus get quite a considerable time to pull under its cover,

AS THE PIRATE CRAFT was down the curve of the point. Springing inside I seized my repeating Winchester, and going to the stern aimed and fired twice. The second shot evidently struck, for one of the oars was dropped and loud cries of pain and anger were distinctly audible. Kicking the steersman, I motioned to our crew to row hard, so as to turn the point. He grasped the situation, and pouring out a volume of words rushed through the boat and got the four others to once more work the oars. Standing with the long tiller between my legs, I steered for the point of the high bank, firing my rifle every time I could see anyone on the other boat. The four oars were now going again on each boat, but evidently by using one of the two men who at first were firing. The roof of my boat afforded a protection to my men, and gave them courage to keep on pulling, while my rapid shots disconcerted the enemy, and the return shots were at long intervals and very wild. The steersman did not return to his place, but I made him also useful by passing cartridges from the cabin out to me on the after-deck. As we neared the point the pursuing boat made violent exertions to overtake us, and they were certainly going faster than we were. Just as we reached the turn an unlucky shot struck one of oars and cut